

MAINE LEARNING RESULTS

CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT

Students will learn the constitutional principles and the democratic foundations of national, state, and local systems and institutions. Further, students will learn how to exercise the rights and responsibilities of participation in civic life and to analyze and evaluate public policies. This understanding entails insight into political power, how it is distributed and expressed, the types and purposes of governments, and their relationships with the governed.

RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PARTICIPATION

Students will understand the rights and responsibilities of civic life and employ the skills of effective civic participation. Students will be able to:

ELEMENTARY GRADES Pre-K-2

1. Identify and practice classroom rights and responsibilities.

EXAMPLE: Participate in a process to determine classroom rules that protect the rights and property of each student in the class, and establish guidelines for individual and cooperative learning.

ELEMENTARY GRADES 3-4

1. Identify important individual rights (e.g., freedom of religion, speech, ownership of property).
2. Explain why certain responsibilities of democratic society are important.
3. Identify the functions of government at school, locally, and at the state level.

MIDDLE GRADES 5-8

1. Identify the characteristics of an effective citizen.
2. Evaluate and defend positions on current issues regarding individual rights and judicial protection.
3. Describe and analyze the process by which a proposed law is adopted, including the role of governmental and non-governmental influences.
4. Identify ways in which citizens in a pluralistic society manage differences of opinion on public policy issues.
5. Explain the functions of and relationships among local, state, and national governments.

SECONDARY GRADES

1. Develop and defend a position on a public policy issue within our democracy.
2. Assess the reasons why participation of an attentive, knowledgeable, and competent citizenry is important to constitutional democracy, using examples from personal or historical experience.
3. Describe the circumstances under which civil disobedience might be justified.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the processes of voter registration and voter participation.

PURPOSE AND TYPES OF GOVERNMENT

Students will understand the types and purposes of governments, their evolution, and their relationships with the governed. Students will be able to:

ELEMENTARY GRADES Pre-K-2

1. Understand that all nations have governments.

ELEMENTARY GRADES 3-4

1. Describe why we need governments (e.g., law and order, defense, roads, schools).
2. Describe the basic structure of local and state governments.

MIDDLE GRADES 5-8

1. Compare leadership and civil rights in our democracy to their status under an authoritarian type government.
2. Compare and contrast the structures of local, state, and national government.
3. Contrast the roles of local, state, and national governments by investigating, evaluating, and debating a current civic issue.
4. Identify key representatives in legislative branches and the heads of executive and judicial branches in Maine and in the United States government.
5. Assess competing ideas about the purposes government should serve (e.g., individual rights versus collective rights).
6. Explain the history and functions of Maine state government including the Constitution of Maine.

SECONDARY GRADES

1. Compare and contrast the purpose and the structure of the United States government with other governments (parliamentary, dictatorship, monarchy) with respect to ideology, values, and histories.
2. Assess the different jurisdictions and roles of local, state, and federal governments in relation to an important public policy issue.
3. Analyze the major arguments for and against representative government as distinguished from direct democracy.
4. Assess the tension between the public's need for government services and the varying availability of revenue through taxes at the local, state, and federal levels.
5. Evaluate the role of the media and public opinion in United States politics, including ways the government and media influence public opinion.

C. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT AND CONSTITUTIONS

Students will understand the constitutional principles and the democratic foundations of the political institutions of the United States. Students will be able to:

ELEMENTARY GRADES Pre-K-2

1. Understand that the United States has a constitution.

ELEMENTARY GRADES 3-4

1. Explain how the Constitution protects individual rights (e.g., Bill of Rights).

MIDDLE GRADES 5-8

1. Explain the meaning and importance of fundamental principles of American constitutional democracy (e.g., popular sovereignty, rule of law, three branches of government, representative institutions, shared powers, checks and balances, and separation of church and state).
2. Examine civil rights, liberties, and responsibilities established in the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights.
3. Take and defend positions on current issues involving the constitutional practice of individual rights (e.g., freedom of speech, separations of church and state).
4. Explain the importance, in a pluralistic society, of having certain shared political values and principles.

SECONDARY GRADES

1. Explain the historical foundations of constitutional government in the United States (e.g., Magna Carta, Roman Republic, colonial experience, Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, Constitution of the United States).
2. Evaluate the Federalist and anti-Federalist positions on the ratification of the Constitution in light of historical developments.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Constitution as a vehicle for change.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the meaning and importance of traditional democratic assumptions such as individual rights, the common good, self-government, justice, equality, and patriotism.
5. Demonstrate how the United States Constitution uses checks and balances in order to prevent the abuse of power (e.g., Marbury vs. Madison, Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, Watergate).

6. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on current issues regarding judicial protection and individual rights.
7. Examine civil rights issues related to well-known Supreme Court decisions.